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## Viewing cable 08SANJOSE910, GOCR FEARS INSTABILITY FROM NICARAGUAN MUNICIPAL

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08SANJOSE910**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">08SANJOSE910</a>	<a href="#">2008-11-21 18:32</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy San Jose</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-07/Investigacion/NotasDestacadas/Investigacion2704388.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-07/Investigacion/NotaPrincipal/Investigacion2704402.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-07/Investigacion/NotasSecundarias/Investigacion2704436.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-07/Investigacion/NotasSecundarias/Investigacion2705536.aspx>

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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSJ #0910/01 3261832  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 211832Z NOV 08  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0291  
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1139  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 0578

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 000910

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA, WHA/CEN AND USOAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/21/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINS](#) [PREF](#) [OAS](#) [CS](#) [NU](#) [CA](#) [VZ](#)  
SUBJECT: GOCR FEARS INSTABILITY FROM NICARAGUAN MUNICIPAL  
ELECTIONS; WILL SPEAK OUT IN MULTILATERAL FORA

Classified By: DCM Peter M. Brennan for reason 1.4(d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The GOCR will speak out in multilateral fora about the fraudulent municipal elections in Nicaragua, including in the November 20 OAS debate, but will not confront its northern neighbor directly. The GOCR will urge adherence to the principles of the Democratic Charter, but will not specifically raise the issue of "electoral process" to avoid fueling GON complaints of "international interference." The GOCR is also concerned that lingering political instability following the elections may fuel Nicaraguan immigration and asylum requests to Costa Rica. The MFA hopes that international assistance cut off in the wake of the elections can be redirected to Costa Rica, should the flow of Nicaraguans greatly increase. On another note, echoing concerns in Ottawa, the Canadian Embassy urged us not to ask for a simple recount of "fraudulent" ballots. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Following discussions with MFA Chief of Staff Antonio Alarcon on November 10, DCM had a follow-up conversation with Alarcon on November 18 to again convey points in reftel. Alarcon indicated that he and VFM Edgar Ugalde (a former Costa Rican Ambassador to Nicaragua) had been in close consultation with FM Stagno in NY regarding the Nicaragua situation, and that they shared our concerns. While noting that they had to be particularly careful in their approach and pronouncements on Nicaragua, "due to the complicated relations between our countries," Alarcon indicated that the GOCR looked forward to working in concert with the U.S. and the other democratically-minded countries in the OAS in defense of the Democratic Charter and Secretary General Insulza in this debate.

¶3. (SBU) DCM also met with counterparts from other donor countries (EU, UK, Canada, Germany, Holland, France, Japan and the Vatican) assigned to San Jose to discuss and convey key points regarding the Nicaraguan elections. Almost all were in agreement with our positions, and indicated that they would urge their governments to stand firm and united against the electoral fraud taking place in Nicaragua. On November 19, Canadian DCM Stuart Hughes, who covers Nicaragua from San Jose and had been there recently, contacted PolCouns with concerns that reftel demarche would be (unintentionally) counterproductive and was already a little out of date. Ottawa wanted all concerned parties to back the opposition's demand that the voting actas be re-examined and compared to electoral court figures. If all we pressed for was a "transparent recount," the Ortega regime would easily produce its own numbers and not the real results, given that it already had plenty of time to doctor ballots. This would be a "recipe for disaster." On November 20, Hughes said that Ottawa had been in touch the day before with the Department to express the same concerns.

¶4. (SBU) On November 20, we attended with Hughes an already planned MFA debriefing for the U.S. and Canada on Chinese President Hu's recent visit (septel). Together, per reftel, we took the opportunity to find out what action the GOCR had planned regarding Nicaraguan elections, given its public silence on the issue thus far. Our session became a defacto joint demarche.

¶5. (C) MFA Deputy Director of Foreign Policy Alex Solano also told us that the GOCR planned to speak at the November 20 OAS debate in support of SYG Insulza and would urge adherence to the Democratic Charter, but that it would not specifically raise the issue of "electoral process" to avoid playing directly into Nicaragua's agenda. The GOCR would push the theme of democratic institutions. Solano said that the GOCR representative had personally received instructions from FonMin Stagno (currently in the UN with President Arias) before flying to Washington for the debate.

¶6. (C) Solano doubted progress could be made at the OAS; he expected the ALBA countries to (obviously) block needed consensus. He was unsure which way Honduras would lean,

calling Honduran policies "gelatinous." When asked whether SICA could play a constructive role, he replied, "No, SICA is fragmented as well, as is the Grupo del Rio."

¶17. (C) According to Solano, the MFA noted "alarming signals of violence" in Nicaragua and feared renewed migratory flows to Costa Rica, plus the possibility of its Embassy in Managua being "overrun" with asylum seekers, including members of the opposition. Costa Rica was not prepared for a new wave of refugees, he stressed, and would ask the donor community in

that case to divert funds being pulled out of Nicaragua to Costa Rica to deal with the situation.

¶18. (C) Hughes brought up the desires of the younger generation and civil society groups for democracy in Nicaragua, while the Sandinista regime obviously was longing for the "romantic days" of its past. Solano responded that the current political unrest could become a "detonator" for another civil war in Nicaragua.

¶19. (C) As an aside, Solano told us that the MFA had heard that even Venezuela had become concerned with Nicaragua's lack of transparency in using donor funds and that the BRV was about to ask for an accounting of its own educational and health assistance to Nicaragua. The GON was almost completely dependent on foreign aid Solano asserted; even the visiting Chinese President's delegation told the MFA this week that Nicaragua would probably be the last in the region to switch allegiance from Taiwan to China, because it had become so dependent on Taiwan that it could not survive any break in assistance flows.

¶10. (C) COMMENT: Though Costa Rica is generally a strong defender of Democracy and free and fair electoral processes, the GOCR's own precarious relationship with its neighbor coupled with its fear of repeating the immigration waves of past seem to have Costa Rica in a defensive position rather than a proactive one. While we saw the GOCR's response as understandable but somewhat timid, we were pleased that the GOCR indicated they were prepared to speak up with us and Canada during the OAS debate on November 20. END COMMENT.  
CIANCHETTE